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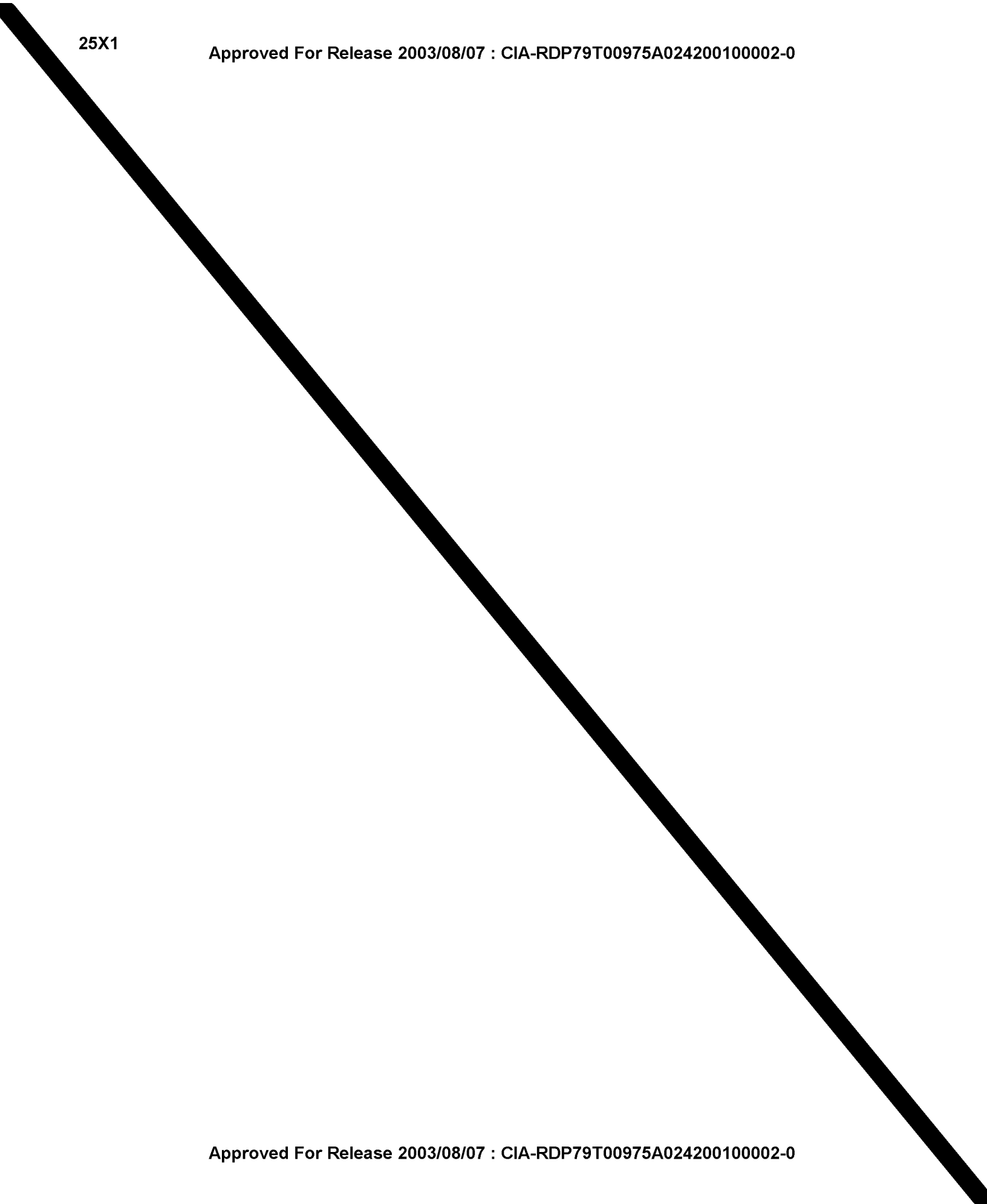

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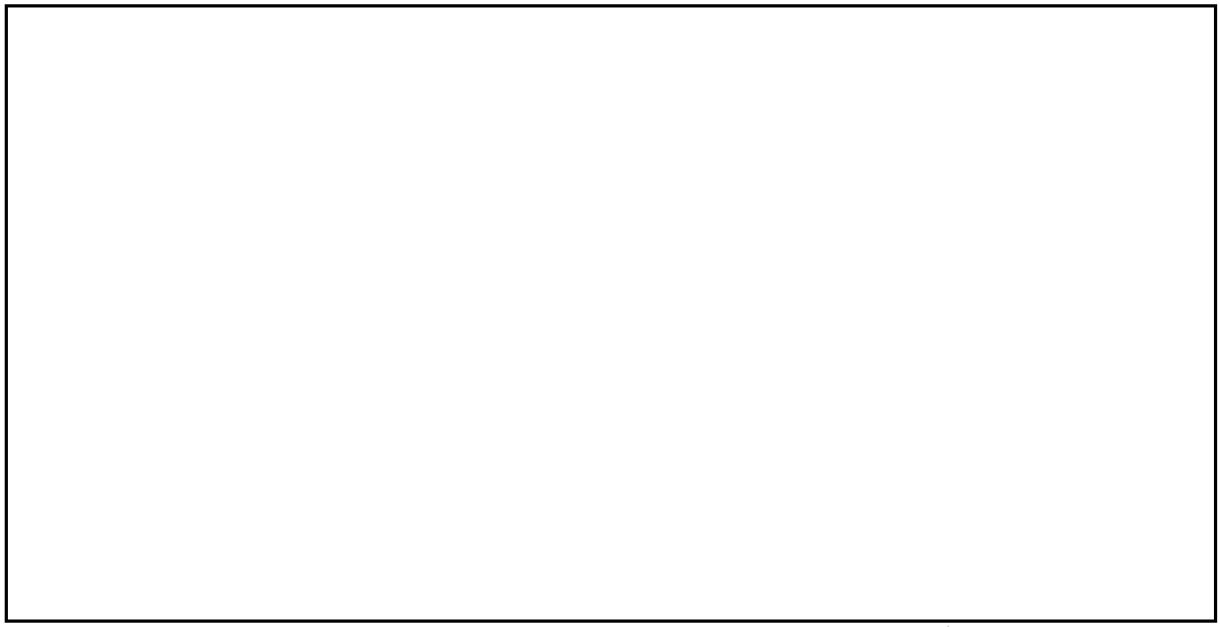
SOUTH VIETNAM: The Communists may be planning a limited increase in military operations in northern South Vietnam.



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Currently the Communists have at least two full divisions and several independent infantry regiments, supported by artillery and armor, that could participate in the attacks. The government has begun replacing some Airborne and Marine units with regional forces, but the rotation is expected to be limited in scale. It would seem unlikely that Saigon is planning to weaken its northern defense line by sending all of these first-line combat units elsewhere until it is sure that the local forces can contain the current Communist threat in Quang Tri Province.

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CHINA-JAPAN: The private Chinese delegation that arrived in Tokyo yesterday--the highest ranking since the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations--will attempt to influence public opinion on Taiwan and the Soviet Union.

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The head of the delegation, Liao Cheng-chih, claimed publicly last month that there could be "serious" consequences if the Japanese proceed with the Tyumen oil project, and he will probably miss no opportunity to develop this theme. A large part of the delegation is scheduled to spend almost all of its time in Hokkaido conducting "people to people diplomacy" in support of Japanese attempts to regain the Northern Territories. The Chinese probably hope that this will make it difficult for Prime Minister Tanaka to take a soft line on this issue when he visits Moscow later this year.

While Liao has been a key architect in the shaping of Chinese policy toward Japan, his delegation's visit is an "unofficial" mission.

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Argentina: Sunday's runoff election gave the Peronists strong control of the Congress, which will open in May for the first time since 1966, and 20 of the 22 provincial governorships. Another governor's race is still in dispute.

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Ireland: Dublin has made an informal protest to Libya over Tripoli's involvement in an abortive attempt to smuggle weapons to the IRA.

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25X1 Panama: The Panama-flag vessels Johnny Express and Layla Express, seized on the high seas by the Cuban Navy in December 1971, have departed Cienfuegos, Cuba, and are expected to arrive in Panama on 22 April.

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